

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-21 were rejected. By the present Response, claims 1, 5, 7-9, 13, 15-19, and 21 are amended. New claims 22-24 are added. These amendments and new claims do not add any new matter. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-24 will be pending in the present patent application. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected independent claims 1, 9, 17 and their dependent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art (hereinafter "AAPA") in view of Janik et al. (U.S. Patent Application 2003/0137662, hereinafter "Janik"), or in view of these combined with the teachings of Svetkoff et al. (U.S. Patent 6,028,671, hereinafter "Svetkoff").

Independent claim 1, 9, and 17 and their dependent claims

As amended, independent claims 1, 9, and 17 recite, *inter alia*, "a plurality of images of the object *at different orientations relative to one another*." In addition, the amended independent claims 1 and 9 recite, *inter alia*, that "the system is configured to *combine the images*." Similarly, the amended independent claim 17 recites, *inter alia*, "*combining the plurality of images*."

Although the Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's statements and rejections regarding AAPA, the Applicants stress that the present application clearly does not admit the foregoing features as prior art. In fact, the foregoing features are also missing from the cited references.

First, the Janik reference fails to teach or suggest a number of claim features missing from the AAPA. For example, FIG. 2a and FIG. 2b illustrates a system for

analyzing a thin film using an energy beam, such as a laser beam, to remove a portion of a contaminant layer formed on the thin film surface. This cleaning operation removes only enough of the contaminant layer to allow analysis of the underlying thin film, thereby enhancing analysis throughput while minimizing the chances of recontamination and/or damage to the thin film. Janik fails to disclose at least one camera configured and adapted to take images of the object at different orientations relative to one another. Janik also fails to disclose a system configured to combine the images.

Second, the Svetkoff reference fails to teach or suggest a number of claim features missing from the AAPA and the Janik reference. For example, FIG. 3 of the Svetkoff reference illustrates a method and system provided for suppressing or filtering multiple reflections which corrupt photometric or height measurements within optical system such as imaging systems. A beam of electromagnetic energy generated by a source polarized in a first rotational sense, transmitted to a point of interest of an object, is reflected and received by a receiver having a polarizer which passes reflected electromagnetic energy having a second rotational sense opposite the first rotational sense. This reference does not describe combining the images of the object taken by the camera at different orientations relative to one another.

Thus, even if the Janik and Svetkoff are hypothetically combined with the AAPA, the hypothetical combination does not support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of independent claims 1, 9, and 17, and their respective dependent claims. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17, and their dependent claims.

New claims

As noted above, the Applicants added new claims 22-24, and believe these claims are in condition for allowance. For example, new dependent claims 22 and 23

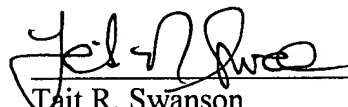
recite "the system is configured to combine the images to amplify intensity of scattered light and to reduce intensity of inter-reflection light." Similarly, new dependent claim 24 recites "the step of combining comprises combining the plurality of images to amplify intensity of scattered light and to reduce intensity of inter-reflection light." The cited references, taken alone or in hypothetical combination, do not teach or suggest at least the foregoing features of the new dependent claims 22-24. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully stress that the new dependent claims 22-24 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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